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O D E.

PINDARUM QUISQUIS STUDET ÆMULARI.



1st Ed.

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T O

THE EARL OF CARLISLE,

MY LORD,

I Beg leave to present to your Lordship, the following Ode; for at whose shrine can it be offered with more propriety, than at your Lordship's, whose taste for Poetry, as well as for every other part of polite Literature, is so justly, and so universally acknowledged? Your Lordship has yourself made no inconsiderable figure in the Lyric; but I will not so much flatter you, even in a Dedication, as to affirm, that you have perfectly succeeded. I allow, that the very few pieces with which you have favoured the public, are as elegant and beautiful as any in our language: I own, that in every one of them there are just conception, lively imagination, correct expression, and clear connection; but I know your Lordship's goodness will

will pardon me, when I presume to assert, that all these excellencies are utterly repugnant to the noble frenzy, and sublime obscurity of the Ode ; both which are sufficiently visible in this, which I have here the honour to lay before your Lordship, and which I take to be a model of perfection : My obligations perhaps, may make me partial to its merits. As to the publication of it, I am indebted for this opportunity of assuring your Lordship that I am,

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's most devoted and

obedient humble Servant,

The EDITOR.

P R E F A C E.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Ode was found in the cabinet of a late celebrated writer ; and is esteemed, by the best judges, to be the most perfect composition of the kind that is any where to be met with amongst the productions of the numerous lyric poets of modern times.

That learned and judicious critic, Dr. Joseph Trap, in his *Prælectiones Poeticæ*, thus describes the most excellent composers of lyric Poems or Odes. “ Conceptus omnium ardentissimi ; a vulgaribus cogitatis remotissimi ; methodum fugere videntur ; transitiones affectant, quæ nulla arte fieri videntur, nihilo licet plus artis insit. Sententiarum nexus & copulas negligere amant ; modo abrupto & improvise poema incipiunt, & finiunt ; & furore quodam usitatis legibus & regulis superiore, ab hoc ad illud devolant, nulla loquendi formulis venia vel obtenta prius, aut petita.” Which, for the benefit of Ladies and Gentlemen, I thus translate : “ Their conceptions are the most
“ daring

“ daring and most remote from all vulgar ideas, or com-
 “ mon sense ; they seem to fly from all method ; they
 “ affect transitions, which appear to be void of all art,
 “ though in them there is a great deal ; they are fond
 “ of neglecting all connections ; they begin and end
 “ their poem in a manner abrupt, sudden, and unexpected ;
 “ and with a madness superior to all the laws and rules of
 “ writing, dash about from one thing to another, without
 “ obtaining pardon, or even condescending to ask it.”

These rules have been observed with great diligence, and
 some success, by most of the writers of modern Odes ; but
 have never been adhered to with that happy exactness, as
 in the piece which is now before us. It begins in a manner
 the most abrupt and unexpected, and ends as abruptly as
 it begins. It opens with a most sublime speech of a
 Giant, supposed to have run mad from some disappoint-
 ment in ambition or love ; and this, in conformity to the
 strictest laws of criticism, and the example of our most
 admired writers of Odes, is so artificially contrived, that the
 reader, however sagacious he may be, cannot possibly dis-
 cover, before he arrives at the end of the second stanza,
 whether it is the speech of the Giant or the Poet, or any
 speech at all.

The

The transition from the Giant's speech, to that beautiful description of the Morning, is truly Pindaric; the sudden apostrophe to the Sun, is perfectly sublime; and that to the Moon no less tender and pathetic: the descriptions of the Four Seasons are wonderfully picturesque, and are not, as usual, copies drawn from the scenery of Italian groves, and the plains of Arcadia, but true originals, taken on the spot in Old England, and formed of ideas intirely new. And the address to Liberty, which concludes this admirable Ode, is far superior to any thing of that kind, with which we are so frequently entertained by our most admired poets; as it is more expressive of the true sense and spirit of an Englishman.

Just and lively pictures are the very essence of an Ode, as well as of an Auction-room, whether there are any proper places to hang them in or not; and such there are in the narrow compass of this little piece, of every thing that is great and beautiful in Nature; of the morning rising from the ocean; of the sun, the moon, and the planetary system; of a giant and a hermit; of woods, rocks, and mountains, and the seasons of the revolving year: and in all these, the images are so intirely

5

new,

new, the transitions so sudden and unexpected, so void of all apparent art, yet not without much of that which is quite invisible; the thoughts are so sublime, so distant from all vulgar ideas, or common sense, that the judicious reader will scarcely find in it a single deviation from the severest laws of just criticism; and if he can peruse this incomparable work without an enthusiastic admiration, he ought to conclude, that whatever delight he may receive from poetry of other kinds, he is one of those unfortunate genius's who have no taste for that most sublime species of it, the Ode.

O D E.

I'LL combat Nature, interrupt her course,
And baffle all her stated laws by force ;
Tear from its bed the deeply-rooted pine,
And hurl it up the craggy mountain's side ;
Divert the tempest from its destin'd line,
And stem the torrent of th' impetuous tide ;
Teach the dull ox to dance, the ass to play,
And even obstinate Americans t' obey. .

B

Like

Like some dread Herald, tygers I'll compell
 In the same field with stags in peace to dwell :
 The rampant lion now erect shall stand,

Now couchant at my feet shall lye deprest ;
 And if he dares but question my command,
 With one strong blow I'll halve him to a crest.
 Thus spoke the giant Gogmagog : the sound
 Reverberates from all the echoing rocks around.

Now Morning, rob'd in saffron-colour'd gown,
 Her head with pink and pea-green ribbands drest,
 Climbs the celestial staircase, and looks down
 From out the gilt balcony of the East ;
 From whence around she sees
 The crystal lakes and tufted trees,
 The lawns all powder'd o'er with straggling flocks,
 The scarce enlighten'd vales, and high o'er-shadowing rocks.

Enamour'd

Enamour'd with her newly-dawning charms,
 Old Ocean views her with desiring eyes,
 And longs once more to clasp her in his arms,
 Repenting he had suffer'd her to rise ;
 Forth from his tumbled bed,
 From whence she just had fled,
 To the flow, loitering hours he roars amain,
 To hasten back the lovely fugitive again.

Parent of life ! refulgent lamp of day !
 Without whose genial animating ray
 Men, beasts, the teeming earth, and rolling seas,
 Courts, camps, and mighty cities, in a trice
 Must share one common fate, intensely freeze,
 And all become one solid mass of ice ;
 Ambition wou'd be froze, and Faction numb,
 Speeches congeal'd, and Orators be dumb.

Say, what new worlds and systems you survey !

In circling round your planetary way ;

What Beings Saturn's orb inhabit, tell,

Where cold in everlasting triumph reigns ;

Or what their frames, who unconsum'd can dwell

In Mercury's red-hot and molten plains ;

Say ! for most ardently I wish to know,

What bodies can endure eternal fire, or snow !

And thou, sweet Moon ! canst tell a softer tale ;

To thee the Maid, thy likeness, fair and pale,

In pensive contemplation oft applies,

When parted from her lov'd and loving Swain,

And looks on you with tear-besprinkled eyes,

And sighs and looks, and looks and sighs again ;

Say, for thou know'st what constant hearts endure ;

And by thy frequent changes teach the cure.

Thy

Thy gentle beams the lonely hermit sees,
 Gleam thro' the waving branches of the trees,
 Which, high-embow'ring, shade his gloomy cell,
 Where undisturb'd perpetual silence reigns,
 Unless the owl is heard, or distant bell,
 Or the wind whistling o'er the furzy plains.
 How blest to dwell in this sequester'd spot :
 Forgetting parliaments ; by them forgot !

Now lovely Spring her velvet mantle spreads,
 And paints with green and gold the flow'ry meads ;
 Fruit-trees in vast white perriwigs are seen,
 Resembling much some antiquated beau,
 Which North-east winds, that blow so long and keen,
 Powder full oft with gentle fleaks of snow ;
 Soft Nightingales their tuneful vigils hold,
 And sweetly sing and shake----and shake with cold.

Summer succeeds ; in ev'nings soft and warm,

Thrice-happy lovers faunter arm in arm ;

The gay and fair now quit the dusty town,

O'er turnpike-roads incessant chaises sweep,

And whirling, bear their lovely loadings down,

To brace their nerves beneath the briny deep ;

There with success each swain his nymph assails,

As birds, they say, are caught---can we but salt their tails.

Then Autumn, more serene, if not so bright,

Regales at once our palate, and our sight ;

With joy the ruddy orchards we behold,

And of its purple clusters rob the vine ;

The spacious fields are cover'd o'er with gold,

Which the glad farmer counts as ready coin ;

But disappointment oft his hopes attends---

In tythes and mildews the rich prospect ends.

Last,

Laſt, Winter comes ; decrepit, old, and dull ;
 Yet has his comforts too---his barns are full ;
 The ſocial converſe, circulating glaſs,

And chearful fire, are his : to him belong
 Th' enlivening dance that warms the chilly laſs,

The ſerious game at whiſt, and merry ſong ;
 Nor wants he beauties---ſee the Sun-beams glow
 O'er lakes of cryſtal ice, and plains of ſilver ſnow !

Thus roll the ſeaſons o'er Britannia's land,
 But none her freeborn-weather can command ;
 Seaſons unlike to thoſe in fervile climes,

Which o'er Hiſpania's or Italia's plains
 Diſpenſe, at regular and ſtated times,

Succeſſive heat and cold, and drought and rains ;
 Her's ſcorning, like her ſons, to be controul'd,
 Breathe heat in Winter oft, and oft in Summer cold.

Hail, Liberty, fair Goddess of this isle !

Deign on my verses, and on me, to smile ;

Like them unfetter'd by the bonds of sense,

Permit us to enjoy life's transient dream,

To live, and write, without the least pretence

To method, order, meaning, plan, or scheme ;

And shield us safe beneath thy guardian wings,

From Law, Religion, Ministers, and Kings.

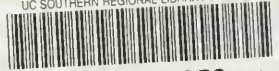
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